

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 06077 120240Z

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6543

INFO AMEMBASSY ABINJAN

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ISTANBUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UNCLAS CANBERRA 6077

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, BFOL, AS

SUBJ: DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN FOREIGN SERVICE POSTS
AND COMMERCE DEPARTMENT DISTRICT OFFICES

REF: STATE 202051

1. WE SHARE THE VIEW GENERALLY HELD BY OTHER POSTS WHICH
HAVE COMMENTED ON THIS QUESTION THAT (1) SOME RELAXATION
OF THE PRESENT CENTRALIZATION OF SUCH COMMUNICATIONS IS
DESIRABLE, AND (2) THAT SUCH RELAXATION SHOULD BE UNDER-
TAKEN CAUTIOUSLY IN ORDER TO AVOID AN UNNECESSARY AND
UNPRODUCTIVE PROLIFERATION OF DIRECT COMMUNICATION.

2. IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH "(2)" WE SUGGEST (A) THAT THE
CATEGORIES OF TRANSACTIONS ON WHICH DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 CANBER 06077 120240Z

IS PERMITTED BE PRECISELY DEFINED, AND (B) THAT THESE

CHANGES BE EXPLICITLY ADOPTED FOR A SPECIFIED TRIAL PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS OR ONE YEAR DURING AND AT THE END OF WHICH THE STRENGTH OR WEAKNESSES OF THE ARRANGEMENT BE EVALUATED AS A BASIS FOR A FINAL DECISION ON PERMANENT ARRANGEMENTS, AND (C) THAT DURING THIS TRIAL PERIOD IT BE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE LIBERALIZATION FOR COMMUNICATION WITH DISTRICT OFFICES SHOULD NOT BE EXTENDED CONSCIOUSLY OR UNCONSCIOUSLY TO ENCOURAGE AN INCREASE IN DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH POSTS BY INDIVIDUAL FIRMS IN THE UNITED STATES.

3. IN DEFINING THE SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF TRANSACTION ON WHICH DIRECT COMMUNICATION WOULD BE PERMITTED, WE SUGGEST THAT THEY BE LIMITED TO TRANSACTIONS (1) IN WHICH TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE, (2) WHICH INVOLVE INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSMEN OR INDIVIDUAL FIRMS, AND (3) WHICH ARE OPERATIONAL RATHER THAN POLICY IN CHARACTER, AND (4) WHICH DO NOT INVOLVE SUBSTANTIAL INPUTS OF STAFF TIME OR RESOURCES. THE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES CITED BY OTHER ADDRESSEES SUBSTANTIALLY CONFORM TO THESE TESTS AND NEED NOT BE REPEATED.

4. PARTICULAR CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO EXCLUDE FROM DIRECT COMMUNICATION COMPREHENSIVE REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION OR DATA AND/OR ANY OTHER TYPE OF INQUIRY UNTIL AND UNLESS IT IS ESTABLISHED THAT THE ANSWER IS NOT ALREADY AVAILABLE IN USDOC WASHINGTON.

5. IN SUMMARY, WE BELIEVE THAT THE QUALITY OF OUR COMMERCIAL SERVICES WOULD BE IMPROVED IF POSTS AND DO'S WERE GIVEN DISCRETION TO COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY ON CERTAIN CAREFULLY LIMITED CATEGORIES OF TRANSACTIONS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO NORMAL ROUTING VIA USDOC IN THOSE PARTICULAR CASES IN WHICH THERE IS A TANGIBLE ADVANTAGE IN DOING SO. WE WOULD EXPECT SUCH DISCRETION, PROPERLY USED, TO BE EMPLOYED ON ONLY A SMALL PROPORTION OF OUR TOTAL COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC. IN ALL CASES, MOREOVER, USDOC SHOULD RECEIVE INFORMATION COPIES IN BOTH DIRECTIONS AND IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE EXPERIMENT THAT USDOC IN FACT PROVIDE MACHINERY TO MAINTAIN SURVEILLANCE OF THIS TRAFFIC AND PROMPTLY TO DETECT AND COUNTERMAN INAPPROPRIATE REQUESTS. GIVEN THESE CONDITIONS, WE DO NOT FORESEE ANY UNUSUAL

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PAGE 03 CANBER 06077 120240Z

PROBLEMS IN OUR COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS AND BELIEVE SUCH A MOVE WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE.
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